

I CLAIM:

1. A method of providing coupons, the method comprising the steps of:

identifying items in a current transaction;

5 assigning an expected value to each coupon of a coupon set based on a comparison of the identified items with a predictor set that links expected value to each coupon of the coupon set;

selecting a coupon from the coupon set based on the expected value of the coupon; and

10 printing the selected coupon.

2. The method of claim 1, further including the step of ranking each coupon of the coupon set to give each coupon a priority rank based on the
15 assigned expected value.

3. The method of claim 2, where selection of a coupon is made based on priority rank.
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4. The method of claim 1, where plural coupons are selected and printed.

25 5. The method of claim 4, where a number of coupons to be printed is selected based on quantity of items in the current transaction.

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6. The method of claim 4, where a number of coupons to be printed is selected based on total price of items in the current transaction.

7. The method of claim 1, where printing occurs on a transaction record.

8. The method of claim 1, where printed coupon appearance changes based on expected value.

9. The method of claim 1, where printed coupon appearance changes based on quantity of items in the current transaction.

10. The method of claim 1, where printed coupon appearance changes based on total price of items in the current transaction.

11. A method of selecting a coupon for presentation, the method comprising the steps of:

identifying items in a current transaction;

assigning an expected value to each coupon of a coupon set based on a comparison of the identified items with a value predictor set that relates each coupon to a benefit received by transacting a subject item of such coupon; and selecting a coupon based on the expected value of the coupon.

12. The method of claim 11, where the benefit received is profit for selling a subject item upon coupon redemption.

5 13. The method of claim 11, where the predictor set determines a redemption frequency, and the expected value is a product of the redemption frequency multiplied by the benefit.

10 14. The method of claim 13, where the redemption frequency is substantially equal to a confidence of an association rule.

15 15. A system for printing coupons, comprising:
an input device configured to identify items in a current transaction;
a processor that includes a correlation data structure in which each coupon of a coupon set is linked to a predictor set and an expected value, where the processor is operatively connected to the input device and configured to create a transaction file from the identified items, to assign the expected value to each coupon of the coupon set based on a comparison of the transaction file with the predictor set of each coupon, and to select a coupon of the coupon set based on the expected value of the coupon; and
20 a printer operatively connected to the processor and configured to print the coupon selected by the processor.

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16. The system of claim 15, where the processor is further configured to rank each coupon of the coupon set to give each coupon a priority rank based on the assigned expected value.

17. The system of claim 16, where the processor selects the coupon based on the priority rank of the coupon.

5 18. The system of claim 15, where the expected value is at least partially determined by a benefit received by transacting a subject item of each coupon.

10 19. The system of claim 15, where the expected value is related to a redemption frequency determined by the predictor set.

15 20. The system of claim 19, where the redemption frequency is substantially equal to a confidence of an association rule.

21. A processor for assigning an expected value to coupons, comprising:

20 a site for receiving item identification and configured to create a transaction file in memory from the item identification;

a correlation data structure contained in memory and including a coupon set, where each coupon of the coupon set is linked to a predictor set and an expected value; and

25 instructions configured to compare the transaction file with the predictor set and to assign the expected value to a coupon of the coupon set when the predictor set of the coupon is included in the transaction file.

22. The processor of claim 21, where the instructions are further configured to rank each coupon of the coupon set to give each coupon a priority rank based on the assigned expected value.

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23. The processor of claim 22, where the processor selects the coupon based on the priority rank of the coupon.

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24. The processor of claim 21, where the expected value is at least partially determined by a benefit received by transacting a subject item of each coupon.

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25. The processor of claim 21, where the expected value is related to a redemption frequency determined by the predictor set.

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26. The processor of claim 25, where the redemption frequency is substantially equal to a confidence of an association rule.

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27. The processor of claim 21, further comprising a coupon image file for the coupon.